



National Brownfields Assessment Pilot

Chicopee, MA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Chicopee for a Brownfields Pilot. Chicopee's (population 56,600) downtown industry is prevented from expanding by contaminated industrial properties. One particular site (the former Bay State Wire Company) will be the target of the Pilot. The Bay State Wire Building was destroyed by fire in 1993, eliminating 40 jobs and over \$80,000 in tax revenues. The State has removed hazardous materials from the surface (drums, asbestos), but contaminated soils are suspected. Abutting industries cannot expand due to environmental contamination at the site. At least three other brownfields also will be assessed based on experience gained from the Bay State Wire site. Most of Chicopee's former industrial sites lie in the poor and disadvantaged section of the City.

OBJECTIVES

Chicopee's brownfields focus is to restore the former Bay State Wire site. A prospective purchaser already has expressed interest in redeveloping the Bay State Wire site. The Chicopee Brownfield Task Force has established the following objectives: 1) minimize administrative costs for brownfields revitalization projects; 2) maximize the use of funding for site assessment, remediation, and monitoring; 3) create a

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Chicopee, Massachusetts

Date of Award:
September 1996

Amount: \$59,000

Site Profile: The Pilot targets the 1.85-acre former site of the Bay State Wire Company building, which is abutted by small industries and a dense residential neighborhood.

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working model for future brownfields cleanup and reuse; 4) develop a database and criteria for best use of public and private funding; and 5) educate the community on brownfields issues.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot has:

- Conducted a neighborhood meeting in November 1996 as part of the planned educational program for the Willimansett neighborhood;
- Coordinated the first brownfields public information session on February 20, 1997 at a local hall. This meeting included residents, representatives from an abutting industry interested in expansion, and Health Department officials;
- Finalized plans and specifications for the removal of hazardous materials at the site; and
- Distributed the second Brownfields Newsletter to City residents and other interested parties in June 1997.

The Pilot is:

- Continuing discussions with abutting industries which show interest in redevelopment of the Brownfields Pilot area; and
- Documenting the brownfields process into a replicable model for future brownfields cleanup and reuse projects will take place during the summer.

LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Chicopee Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities including the following.

- Began the assessment of the nature and extent of contamination at the former Bay State Wire site. The Chicopee Brownfields Pilot award was for \$59,000. The balance of the expenses for the site assessment and other activities are provided from other City resources. A Phase I report for the site the environmental conditions of the building and site has been completed, and areas of concern have been identified. Cleanup of the site will begin in May 1997.